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The Zoning Board membership is mentioned too because we regularly address New York's SEQUA requirements, and if any resident ever said they wanted a "buffer" between them and their neighbors, but will not tell their neighbors and the Village Board how large that space will be, what kind of landscaping will be included, how high any landscaping or fence will be or even what that fence will look like, chances are that such a request for relief would be readily denied as being insufficient, and the Town of Hempstead Zoning Board would likely not permit that to ever take place either.

MITIGATION

How the State of New York therefore can allow this DEIS to move forward as currently presented is simply outrageous.

The State of New York needs to MITIGATE **BEFORE** the arena, hotel and retail megamall are allowed to operate and open.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement [DEIS] is seriously deficient and its SCOPE of review is far too narrow and therefore needs to be redone.

The submitted DEIS does not encompass the ENTIRE 435 acre Belmont Park campus, which is a fatal flaw that needs to be corrected BEFORE any shovels are allowed to be put into the ground.

SEGMENTATION

It appears that on one hand, the State of New York's Empire State Development [ESD] team and New York Arena Partners' [NYAP] hired consultants time after time assert that anything to do with the rest of the Belmont Park campus is beyond their scope.

They also claim that the New York Racing Association [NYRA] with its plans for new night time horse racing, with new light towers similar to those installed at Daytona Raceway, as well as new winterized tracks and racing, for example, are also not their concern and will be ignored as part of their ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT study, which is therefore fatally flawed.

Their DEIS makes the bold statement:

HOWEVER, ANY ACTIVITIES BY NYRA ARE SEPARATE PROJECTS FROM THE PROPOSED PROJECT, HAVING INDEPENDENT UTILITY FROM SUCH EFFORTS AND **IN NO WAY** DEPENDENT ON SUCH ACTIVITIES. See: DEIS Section 2-26

Yet in the very same DEIS is the admission that in fact the ENTIRE project is VERY DEPENDENT upon NYRA'S portions of the Belmont Park campus, which includes THOUSANDS of parking spaces which the project DEPENDS UPON in order to make the project work.

The DEIS admits that:

THE PROJECT SITES WOULD INCLUDE A TOTAL OF 1,900 PARKING SPACES IN NEW STRUCTURED PARKING BENETH THE RETAIL VILLAGE [sic] AND WITHIN AND BELOW THE HOTEL'S PODIUM. See: DEIS Section 11-2

So this megaproject which itself includes LESS THAN 2,000 parking spaces, even though it includes a 19,000 seat arena, a 250 room hotel with a "CONFERENCE center" and a retail "village" which is projected to attract multi-millions of visitors in and out each year, to state that it is in 'NO WAY DEPENDENT' upon NYRA is simply incredible.

So where will those thousands of arena spectators, hundreds of hotel guests and millions of retail tourists park? Low and behold from the STATE OF NEW YORK itself and its other Belmont Park tenant NYRA!

The DEIS, which on one hand asserts that its focus is just on its own portions of the Belmont Park campus, turns around and makes the following fatally flawed admission:

DURING TIMES OF HIGH ATTENDANCE ARENA EVENTS AND/OR PEAK SHOPPING PERIODS, APPROXIMATELY 6,312 ADDITIONAL PARKING SPACES ON THE NORTH, SOUTH, AND EAST LOTS WOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE TO NYAP THROUGH A SHARED PARKING AGREEMENT WITH THE NYS FRANCHISE OVERSIGHT BOARD (FOB) AND THE NEW YORK RACING ASSOCIATION (NYRA). See: DEID section 11-2

Obviously it is clear that NYAP is completely **dependent** upon NYRA and its portions of the Belmont Park campus too, so the DEIS needs to be completely redone to encompass the MASTER PLAN and DEIS for the entire 435 acre Belmont Park campus.

This is a classic case of improper and too much SEGMENTATION and the State of New York, the OWNER of the entire 435 acre Belmont Park campus needs to fully comply with both the spirit and letter of its own SEQUA protocols and requirements. The DEIS needs to be redone.

MASTER PLAN

By way of further example, the Grandstand complex which is directly adjacent to the proposed arena and hotel, as well as across from the retail MEGAMALL which is now on the scale of the Manhasset Miracle Mile rather than just a "retail village", is at 105 feet "surpassing the height of all other buildings within the Elmont and Floral Park areas." See DEIS: 2-24.

Just like everything else about this proposed OVERDEVELOPMENT at Belmont Park, the NYAP consultants are touting their reduction of the height of the proposed hotel from 265 feet to "just" 150 feet, which is 45 feet HIGHER than the HIGHEST structure within the community is some sort of "concession" and "improvement" to the DEIS, which is just too much hubris to believe.

The Grandstand and Clubhouse is 265 feet in DEPTH [which is where the NYAP consultants probably came up with for their 'phantom' initial height of 265 feet HIGH hotel] and contains OVER 1.3 million square feet of floor area, so NOT to delve into what NYRA's plans are for Belmont Park and to have to have an COMPREHENSIVE ENVIRONMENTAL review is simply unacceptable.

Many of Value Retail's foreign shopping tourists destinations have steadily expanded through phased expansions, so it is fair to assume that its 435,000 square feet of retail space on the south side of Hempstead Turnpike will eventually be expanded back into the north side of Hempstead Turnpike either within the area where NYAP initially represented to be its "ideal" location, or in conjunction with NYRA's 1.3 million square feet of floor area within the Grandstand and Clubhouse. There seriously needs to be a Master Plan for Belmont Park in which NYAP's current and future plans are clearly mapped out.

ALTERNATIVES

The DEIS is also seriously flawed because it sets out only TWO Alternatives. The preferred alternative is what NYAP proposes, which is the overdevelopment of Belmont Park, which is what it wants. The only "other" alternative is the excluding of the 19,000 seat arena, which many Islander fans would be surprised to learn would be NYAP's first portion of their proposal to be jettisoned, rather than their last.

The DEIS needs to be rejected and redone to break out and address the exclusion of all THREE major components, not just the "no arena" alternative, but also the "no megamall" alternative and the "no 150 feet high hotel" alternatives too.

Of particular glaring deficiency is the failure to honestly set out the specific SEQUA implications relating to the Value Retail megamall. There have been varying estimates of the number of "destination retail" visitors who will be entering and leaving the Belmont Park community on either an annual or more specifically, based upon the traffic flows of the retail year. Is it 3 million, 6 million, 9 million or even more annual visitors?

One need only read about the recent disastrous Black Friday parking lot debacle experienced at Deer Park's discount retail "village" or the over 13 million visitors to Value Retail's major competitor at Woodbury Commons, which is adjacent to the typically free flowing NY State Thoroughway, rather than the ALREADY over capacity Cross island Parkway, to see that NYAP's failure to remove the retail component as a potential Preferred Alternative makes the current DEIS fatally flawed.

PROJECT CREEP

The DEIS needs to be sent back to the drawing board because of the improper Project Creep by which this entire selection and SEQUA review has been poisoned. For the State of New York to be a party to such a hastily and insufficient SEQUA process goes to the very core of government accountability and civic responsibility .

When the NYAP submission was evaluated against its competing plan for an outdoor soccer stadium with underground parking for its attendees, the NYAP proposal that was submitted and initially evaluated with the vast majority of its own on-site parking placed immediately accessible and adjacent to the arena on the 28 acre South lot. NYRA previously stated that its 28 acre parcel south of Hempstead Turnpike encompassed 4,520 parking spaces, while its 8 acre parking field where the proposed arena will be had 1,820 parking spaces, so those 6,340 parking spaces will be all but lost, and only replaced by the 1,900 parking spaces proposed by NYAP, 1,400 of which will be at or below grade at the retail area, not associated with the arena itself.

The 77 acre Nassau Coliseum site, for example, which hosts “Da Barn” with now 13,000 seats has roughly 6,500 parking spots directly adjacent to the arena, which is one parking space for every two attendees. Yet those same NY Islanders propose to construct a 19,000 seat arena with only 1,900 parking spaces of their own, which is one parking space for every ten attendees. While we may have enjoyed seeing ten clowns coming out of one car at the circus, all the travel “behavioral changes” in the world will not overcome the seriously flawed DEIS as it has been submitted. This alone is a significant adverse environmental impact that this project must mitigate before any shovels are put into the ground.

As for the unknown, but multi-million “tourist retail” visitors to the “retail village” megamall complex, there have been projections in the DEIS that 30 percent of those visitors will be national or international visitors. The DEIS states that it is “A UNIQUE SHOPPING EXPERIENCE THAT ATTRACTS LOCAL AND REGIONAL CUSTOMERS, AS WELL AS NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL VISITORS, AS VALUE RETAIL’S EXPERIENCE IN BICESTER, UNITED KINGDOM AND IN SHANGHAI CHINA HAS SHOWN.” See: DEIS Section 7-23.

As an initial matter, now that the NYAP representatives have placed into issue their “experience” in Bicester Village near London, which is reportedly the second most visited tourist site for Chinese visitors to the London area, as well as Shanghai China, the State of New York needs to have the DEIS include said “experience” including the number of visitors and travelling patterns provided with specificity, as well as the transportation and parking and other environmental impacts said Value Retail sites have on their hosting communities.

According to recent media reports, for example, the governments hosting the Bicester location have instituted direct train service specifically for the retail experience from central London, unlike the current DEIS which admits that but for 2 LIRR trains to and from major arena events, there will NO such regular LIRR train service whatsoever to or from Belmont Park, which should service both the local community commuters as well as a significant number of those same national and international “retail tourists” who will be travelling to Belmont Park.

To give some perspective to the millions of “retail tourists” that may significantly impact and disrupt the hosting communities, the governor recently held his inaugural address on Ellis Island, which has “just” 3 million visitors a year, and none of which use local communities’ roads to travel there!

NYAP’s major owner should also be familiar with the Empire State Building, since his family real estate firm purchased the Empire State Building land from yet another family owned real estate concern run at the time by Donald Trump, which hosts 3.6 million visitors a year. Has the DEIS consultants even considered the amount of bus traffic and tourist activity around the Empire State Building as a guide post for what will take place at Belmont Park?

Surely the I LOVE NEW YORK tourist promoters within the State of New York can provide a better evaluation of the significant adverse environmental impacts the 3 or 6 or even 9 million “retail tourists” will impact the Belmont Park hosting communities.

NUMBER OF POTENTIAL PERMANANT JOBS: NO ANNUAL SALARIES

While there continues to be a suggestion that 3100 permanent jobs will be created, the DEIS discloses roughly a thousand LESS such jobs.

While the State of New York ESD has disclosed its MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING with Amazon in relation to its Long Island City location, with a stated 25,000 permanent jobs over ten years at an average salary of \$150,000+ per year, no such information or projections are provided within the Belmont Park DEIS.

While the NHL discloses the salaries of all its professional hockey players to the dollar for salary cap purposes, NYAP and Value retail are stunningly silent concerning the projected average salaries that will be created at Belmont Park. Is this because instead of the Amazon highly skilled jobs being \$150,000 per year, the Belmont Park low skilled jobs mostly will be \$15.00 per hour?

Once again the DEIS needs to be redone to address this short coming and to provide the disclosure of all agreements similar to what the ESD has so proudly disclosed in relation to its Amazon megaproject in Long Island City

CONCLUSION

The DEIS is seriously deficient and must be done over before any approval is provided or any shovel is placed in the ground. Among the three components of the arena, hotel and megamall, the alternative of NO MEGAMALL is the PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE in order to avoid the OVERDEVELOPMENT instead of the redevelopment and improvement of Belmont Park. The State of New York needs to go back to the drawing board and start the DEIS process over.